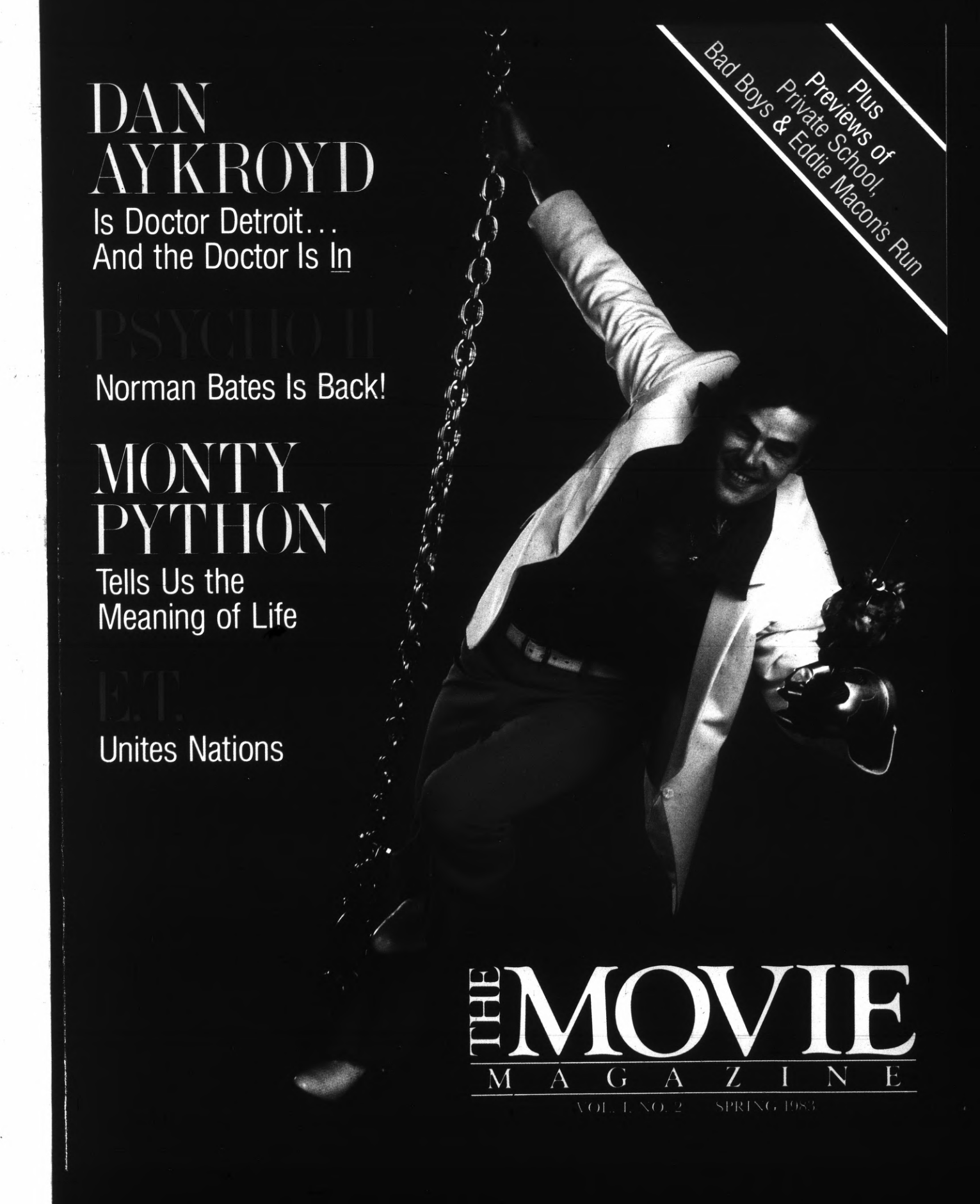
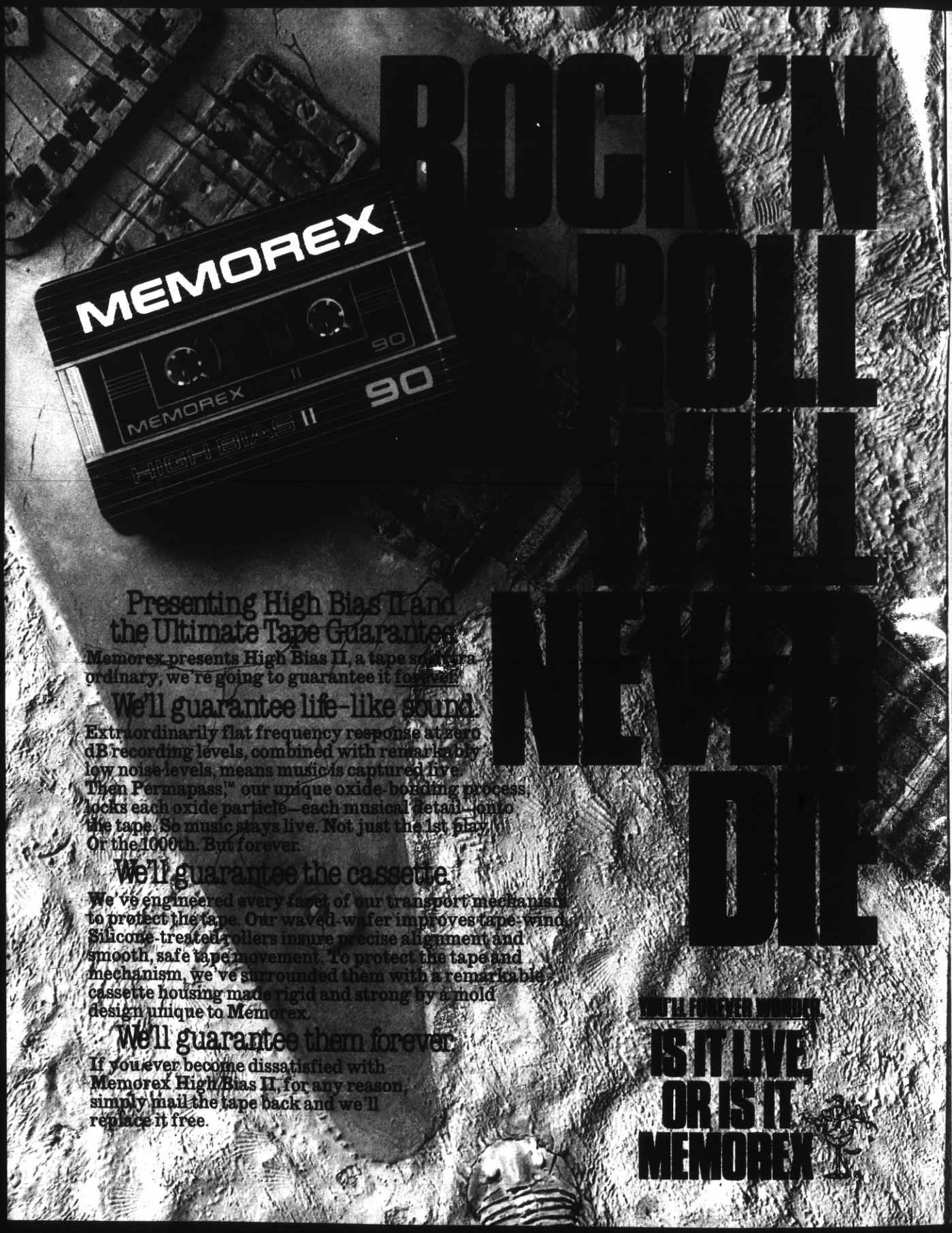

DAN AYKROYD
Is Doctor Detroit...
And the Doctor Is In
PSYCHO II
Norman Bates Is Back!
MONTY PYTHON
Tells Us the Meaning of Life
E.T.
Unites Nations
Plus Previews of Private School, Bad Boys & Eddie Macon's Run
THE MOVIE MAGAZINE
VOL. 1, NO. 2 SPRING 1983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THE MOVIE MAGAZINE

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OUR COVER

Dan Aykroyd swooped around on a chain, with barbecued chicken skewered on his sword, for Los Angeles photographer David Alexander.

letters

In reference to your article on *The Dark Crystal*, what other producer's dream has no agents to call, star salaries to pay, temperamental actors to placate, or any actors at all?

Answer: cartoons.

But like *The Dark Crystal*, cartoons can still be delayed by other headaches. Just look at poor *Mickey's Christmas Carol*. A 9½-week strike botched the meeska mooska mousketeer screen return. For other reasons *Twice upon a Time*, the George Lucas/Ladd Company-financed cartoon, has been delayed until Easter.

Also, there's nothing fantastic about *Sting II* being made 8 years after the first one. *The Black Bird* was made some 40 years after *The Maltese Falcon*. And if *2010: Odyssey Two* comes to the screen there will be at least a 15-year sequel lag.

Movie Magazine has keen writing, but sloppy analogies. But I'm confident your credibility will improve as you become more professional.

Don Gworek
Buffalo, NY

When is a sequel not really a sequel? (This puzzler will keep us buzzing for days.) Sting II *is a sequel because the characters have the same names and refer directly to action that took place in the first* Sting *(as does* Psycho II, *featured in this issue).* The Black Bird *was more homage to, rather than a continuation of,* The Maltese Falcon; *it was a spoof, with no real relationship to* The Maltese Falcon *other than lip service. As for* 2010: Odyssey Two, *we're told that it's not strictly a sequel, because none of the characters or situations remain from the original, but that it will — with any luck — capture the spirit of the Kubrick/Clarke classic.*

As for your confidence in our becoming professional — hey, we're overwhelmed.

I just finished Volume 1, No. 1, of *The Movie Magazine*, which was included in today's issue of the *Poly Post*. I loved it. It's extremely well written, professional and entertaining. I wish you success with the publication.

The idea of including the publication in student papers seems an inspired marketing technique. Obviously, staff members and faculty read the publication also.

Mae Augarten
California State Polytechnic University
Pomona, CA

Errata: In the last (which is also the first) issue of The Movie Magazine, *we neglected to note that the cover photo of Meryl Streep was taken by Douglas Kirkland/Sygma.*

Also, James H. Burns wrote the previews of Sting II *and* Videodrome.

Mail your comments, complaints, kudos and kibbitzing to The Movie Magazine, *1680 North Vine, Suite 900, Hollywood, CA 90028.*

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At last! What we've all been waiting for! *Monty Python's The Meaning of Life*, in which are answered many meaningful questions, in which we see lots of blood, men in women's clothing, women with very large mammaries, and all the usual tasteful Pythonesque weirdness.

BY IAN JOHNSTONE

Principal photography on the new Monthy Python comedy-epic, *The Meaning of Life*, began on July 12, 1982 — the two hundred and ninety-second anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne — a coincidence of no significance whatever. The location was the International University of Europe, Bushey, Hertfordshire on the outskirts of London and, being graduates, it only took the six Pythons a few days to find their way there.

The previous Monty Python films, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *Life of Brian*, had clear and identifiable themes; but what is the plot of *The Meaning of Life?* A careful cross-questioning of all six Pythons leaves the reporter no closer to the answer.

John Cleese: This whole Meaning of Life thing is a cheap, last-minute attempt to salvage some-shape out of a rag-bag of unconnected sketches, if you want the truth.

Reporter: And if you were to lie?

Cleese: If I were to lie I would say that the whole business of conflict is absolutely central to the crises we face, not only the nuclear crisis, but all the social crises that we face in the last quarter of the 20th century, and this, I think, is in many ways the essence of the film.

Terry Jones: Well it's all human life really, it's everything from birth to the grave. It ends actually beyond the grave, so it's more of a philosophical work than a plot. It is the answer to most people's questions about life, but rather oriented toward fish. It's rather aimed at a fish sort of audience. I don't know if you quite realize the vastness of the shoals of herring and haddock in the North Sea alone. We thought if we could tap that audience we'd really be on to a money-spinner. That's what this is — a fish film aimed at fish.

Eric Idle: It's a fish-eye view of humanity, really. It starts in the tank of a restaurant where fishes wait to be eaten by human beings like you and me, and they swim in and out of the film, making comments, witty after-dinner remarks, or, in their case, before-dinner remarks.

Terry Gilliam: At last a film for ichthyophiles. Actually we're warning ichthyophobes away from this film. We feel that honesty in advertising is very important on these projects.

Graham Chapman: We start just prior to fertilization, I suppose, and then move on through the fertilization of the ovum until we reach, more or less, the fetus, and then birth shortly followed by death. Well, there's an intervening stage called life, but then we're on to the important bits again — death, and the consequences of it. It's all human life.

Michael Palin: The meaning of life itself is a very strong philosophical concept. Why are we here? What are we doing? Why are you wearing that ostrich costume? The bits of the puzzle are going to come together and we'll be able to give you what I think is the definitive answer to the meaning of life. I don't think many films have done that before — *Brigadoon* was the nearest I've seen.

Monty Python is probably the most over-educated group of performers in history. Gilliam went to Occidental College, Los Angeles. Palin and Jones went to Oxford. Cleese, Chapman and Idle went to Cambridge. It was there at Cambridge's famous Footlights revue club — which had already launched David Frost and Peter Cook — that these three were diverted from staid professional careers into the realms of humor.

All five men made their living by writing for radio and television in Britain. David Frost, an international star by the age of 23 and an entrepreneur by the age of 25, spotted their talents and gave them parts or writing jobs in the innumerable shows he was making for British television.

John Cleese was the first to emerge as a household name — in the award-winning "Frost Report" — and BBC Television offered him

Left, Palin, Cleese and Chapman (left to right, in uniforms) inspect a very nasty bit of special makeup which is supposed to make us feel sick and queasy – as do many of their sketches.

At far left, Terry Jones in drag this time, in one of his favorite roles, a frumpy British housewife. Eric Idle looks spookily like an American television religious figure.

Below left, this is not a scene from **Oliver!** *Learn "The Meaning" nationwide March 25.*

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his own series with his writing partner, Graham Chapman. Cleese invited the other four who had made reputations for themselves on Independent Televison's "Do Not Adjust Your Set" to join them.

So in May of 1969 the six men sat down to digest a cheap curry in the Light of Kashmir restaurant in Hampstead and devise a new program called initially "It's" and then "It's Not" and then "A Horse, A Spoon and A Basin," and then "Owl Stretching Time," and then "Gwen Dibley's Flying Circus" and finally, and immortally, "Monty Python's Flying Circus."

Which brings us, and them, to a wet and windy mountain top near Strathblane in Scotland where they are attempting to recreate the Battle of Rorke's Drift, another episode in *The Meaning of Life*. It's a crucial moment in the Boer War with too few British soldiers facing too many Zulus. Unfortunately, today the reverse is the case. It is the Zulu revolt of August 12th, 1982. The local black students and their friends have decided that the temperature — a few perilous degrees above freezing — is a little too chilly to don loin-cloths. Producer John Goldstone is nonplussed. "I don't understand all this unrest among the warriors. We made it clear they would be in Zulu costume."

If the militant black Glaswegians had read the script they would have learned that the satire was directed not against the natives, but at the great divide between officers and men in the British army. While the other ranks are being annihilated by the painted hordes, the officers sip brandy and are only distressed when they find one of their number has been bitten during the night, not by a mosquito, but worse — a tiger has carried off his leg.

Graham Chapman plays Dr. Livingstone, the medical officer who comes to treat him: "Been in the wars have we? Any headache, bowels all right? Well now let's have a look at this leg of yours . . . there's a lot of it about, it's probably a virus, give it plenty of rest, keep warm, if you're playing football or anything try and favor the other leg."

In *The Holy Grail* the team played a body of medieval knights and in *Life of Brian* they donned the sandals and cassocks of the Holy Land, but in their new film they are able to revert to a panoply of modern characters similar to but more excessive than those which inhabited their television series. The names alone give a clue to the variety: Mr. Creosote, Mr. and Mrs. Hendy (the bland, all-accepting American tourists), Fiona, Debbie, the Grim Reaper, Troopers Sturridge, Blackitt and Spadger — not to mention the all-seeing chorus of fish who observe and comment on the follies of mankind.

The fact that the story is too diffuse to relate and the theme too vast to encapsulate can only be a plus. Nothing stimulates like the unexpected. But having addressed their over-educated minds to the vexing problem of "what is the meaning of life," what conclusions have the Pythons come to?

Gilliam: Never be late for supper, clean your plate and don't wet your bed. If you get past that, everything else is easy.

Palin: Basically make real tea rather than tea-bag tea, to eschew instant coffee whenever one can get the real thing and not to live in Surrey, which is not the easiest thing in the world to achieve. But other people feel more strongly about it than I do. They feel one should not live in Surrey or Middlesex even.

Chapman: We don't know. We tried everywhere. We asked everyone, asked a lot of people questions — academics, politicians, fruiterers, everyone, but no one had a clue as to what the meaning of life was. I think we asked the wrong question.

Idle: It's a trade secret. If I tell you, you'll tell someone else. What do you want to know? What is the plot of *Hamlet?*

Part of the fun of being a Python is that you get to dress up in women's clothes. Hard to tell, but it's our guess that Chapman is wearing the garter belt, while Jones waves funny arms about, and the less said about the third member of this trio, the better.

Reporter: The plot of *Hamlet* is the angst of a young man who is wronged by his mother.

Idle: The meaning of life is the angst of a young man who is wronged by his mother.

Jones: It is revealed at the end of the film, so I mean, obviously I can't say now, otherwise people wouldn't bother to go and see the film. But it is revealed at the end of the film.

Cleese: The meaning of life is something that I have, in fact, discovered. But frankly, if you want to know, it will cost you.

Reporter: How about five shillings?

Cleese: No, no, I'm talking big money. I mean, what we're doing in this film, as you must realize, for the price of admission, is instructing people in all they actually need to know in order to have a fulfilling and indeed deeply spiritual life and if that isn't worth the price of a cinema seat, well . . .

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E.T. Phones Home

in Japanese, Portuguese, French, Italian, Spanish . . . (maybe even Russian someday)

BY PAUL ROSTA

When it played in Italy, the audience cheerfully sat in the rain to watch it at an outdoor theater. At the Cannes Film Festival, the world's film royalty gave it a ten-minute standing ovation. And in Japan, the lucky employees of a giant corporation received tickets for it as a year-end bonus.

Millions of people in the United States already know that only one film in recent memory could create this kind of response. Seven months after becoming an instantaneous part of American folklore, *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial* opened in theaters around the world and rapidly caused as much of a sensation as it did in the United States. Although the diminutive astronaut was first sighted in the United States last June, most other Earthlings had to wait months for their close encounter; moviegoers all over the world were well-prepared for the arrival of the visitor from far away.

The first showing of the film outside the United States took place at the Cannes Film Festival in May, about the time of its American premiere. After two press screenings, *E.T.* played for a select gathering of film notables at the Palace of Fine Arts. The black-tie audience gave the film a ten-minute standing ovation, and when Steven Spielberg made the director's obligatory appearance after the show, the crowd didn't want to let him leave the stage.

Throughout the summer before its foreign release, audiences caught tantalizing glimpses of *E.T.* at major festivals in Mexico, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. At the Venice festival, the second screening was held at an outdoor arena. The spectators were drenched by a summer storm, but their spirits were hardly dampened. "They sat there under their umbrellas," marvels Robert Rehme, President of Universal's Theatrical Film Group, "loving every minute of it." Somewhat more clement conditions prevailed for *E.T.*'s royal premiere at the Empire theater in London. Not only did filmgoers manage to stay warm and dry, they were also graced with the presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales. A royal showing in Spain, with King Juan Carlos in attendance, benefitted UNICEF, appropriately enough.

As if they were worried that *E.T.* wouldn't be able to speak for himself, the director and several members of the acting company made overseas pilgrimages to spread the word of his approach. No ambassador for the interplanetary wanderer was received with greater enthusiasm than the youngest — Drew Barrymore, who plays one of *E.T.*'s youthful allies. Dispatched to Japan last summer, the heiress to the royal family of the American theater promptly became a favorite of the Japanese press, especially the photographers. After one of them had the inspiration to outfit the young actress in a kimono, Miss Barrymore's doll-like features could be seen all over Japanese newspapers and magazines.

Nor were journalists in other lands slow to take a shine to *E.T.* "You could fill this room with clippings about *E.T.* that appeared in the press world-wide," says Rehme, indicating the boundaries of his spacious office. It probably would have taken someone as ingenious as Elliott to hide his friend's arrival from the newshounds. Many European publications couldn't wait for *E.T.*'s international release to start showing him off in their pages. Instead of holding off until official press kits arrived, impatient journalists simply pirated pictures from the dozens of American newspapers and magazines that published articles and photographs about the film. When huge color spreads about the movie started appearing Universal decided to compensate, says Rehme. "We went back and shot original photography with Steven Spielberg and *E.T.*, and gave them original material."

The enthusiasm of some other *E.T.* fans left something to be desired. Before *E.T.* was released abroad, some less-than-legitimate businessmen got their hands on prints of the film, and started churning out black-market video cassettes. The film's distributors put 140 private investigators on the trail in Great Britain, the site of the greatest concentration of the video larceny. As a result of the sleuths' efforts, says Rehme, the problem is now under control.

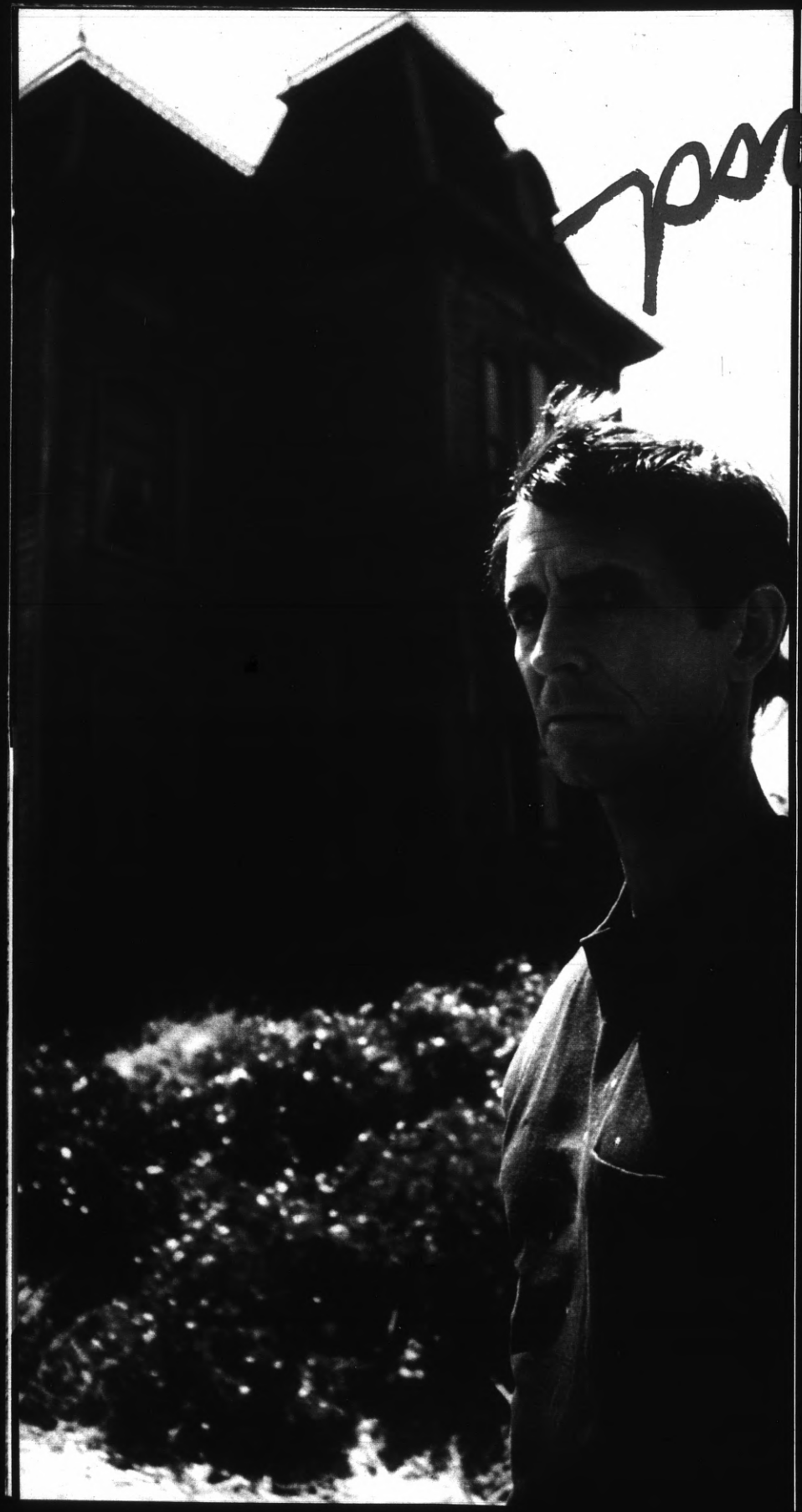
Although there were many tempting sneak previews, legal or otherwise, of the outerspace visitor, audiences had to wait until last November or December before the bashful spaceman made his first full-fledged appearances. In all innocence, E.T. seems to have sparked a feud of interstellar proportions among countries vying for his affections. In France, says Rehme, *E.T.* is already the most popular American film ever to open, and he confidently predicts that it will soon be the most popular film, period. Nine hundred thousand French movie-goers can't be wrong, and that's about how many times the turnstiles spun in the first five days of *E.T.*'s release. More than a third of those connoisseurs were in Paris alone.

Not to be outdone by its perennial rivals across the English Channel, the Empire struck back. During the first three days of *E.T.*'s release, moviegoers in the United Kingdom launched an unprecedented attack on attendance records resulting in new marks at nine theaters in six different cities during the first three days of its release. The Germans were almost, but not quite, as supportive, breaking eight attendance records in its first three days. Everywhere you go — Spain, Finland, Sweden, South Africa, Belgium — the tales of *E.T.*'s broken records start to sound like, well, a broken record. Ironically, the old champion for the first-three-days' showing was *Jaws*, starring, of course, one of *E.T.* director Spielberg's toothier acquaintances.

But the world champion *E.T.* boosters may yet turn out to be — ready for this? — the Japanese. First it was automobiles, then it was transistor radios, and now the Japanese show every sign of borrowing the fine art of *E.T.* mania from the United States and raising it to a new height. Like tickets to plays or concerts in the United States, tickets to motion pictures in Japan may be purchased well in advance, and the Japanese took only a week to order 1,300,000 of them. In nine big-city theaters, which don't seat more than a thousand or twelve hundred people, the film did so well that "they must have been sitting on one another's laps," says Rehme. Fifty thousand lucky Japanese saw the film courtesy of the Mitsubishi company. The executives of the huge corporation decided that a free ticket to *E.T.* was a suitable bonus for a year's hard work.

So that audiences around the world can capture the full flavor of the film, *E.T.* has now been dubbed into such major languages as French, German, Italian and Spanish. Those who are beside themselves with curiosity about how E.T. phones home in Japanese will be disappointed, though, since prints distributed in Japan are supplied with subtitles, as are prints in Sweden and Finland. Japanese subtitles can also be found in Sao Paolo, Brazil, of all places, which has a sizeable Japanese population. Because the lingua franca of Brazil is Portuguese, several prints in Sao Paolo bear traces of three tongues. The characters' mouths move in English, the voices have been dubbed into Portuguese, and the film appears with Japanese subtitles.

Astute observers of international affairs will have already noticed that only people in free-world countries have so far been able to make the acquaintance of *E.T.* But Rehme promises that *E.T.* will part the Iron Curtain someday soon. No matter where *E.T.* goes next, though, he's sure to be welcomed with open arms.



Psycho II

Anthony Perkins Is Back in the Long-Awaited Sequel to Hitchcock's 1960 Thriller

BY ZAN STEWART

An astute craftsman who possesses abundant resources, actor Anthony Perkins has displayed his talent in all manner of dramatic and comedic roles throughout his distinguished and lengthy film and stage career. On the screen, he's graced such diverse works as William Wyler's *Friendly Persuasion* (1956), where he was Gary Cooper's Quaker son, and Alan Rudolph's sadly neglected *Remember My Name* (1978), where he performed with his wife, photographer Berry Berenson.

Perkins is master of the self-conscious twitch, the nervous, awkward stance of a desperate, misunderstood boy/man. He's played a number of weirdos, from *Pretty Poison*'s helpless neurotic to the cold-blooded husband of Sophia Loren in *Five Miles to Midnight*, the hapless homosexual photographer opposite Diana Ross in *Mahogany*, and the anxious secretary in *Murder on the Orient Express*. Throughout these roles Perkins was always appealing — though sometimes perversely so. Most women who watched him believed (and still do) that his characters (and, by extension, Perkins himself) would be just fine and dandy with a little compassion and mothering, some good food (he's so thin . . .), some love.

Among those numerous roles, there's no doubt that Perkins' most memorable, and perhaps most effective, work was done in Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, the gruesome thriller shot in 1960. As Norman Bates, the shy, stuttering and violently repressed owner and sole caretaker of the Bates Motel, Perkins deftly incorporated the elements of sly humor and grisly terror that Hitchcock loved into a performance that kept viewers entranced.

Twenty-two years later, it seems few have forgotten Perkins/Bates or *Psycho*, so, by popular demand, we have *Psycho II*. The sequel is a co-production of Universal Pictures and the Oak Media Development Corporation, headed by Bernard Schwartz. Schwartz is the project's executive producer and Hilton Green, who was the first assistant director of the original

An exact duplicate of the 1960 original, the reconstructed Bates mansion sits gloomily on Universal's back lot. The film opens nationwide in the spring.

Psycho and worked with Hitchcock many times, is the producer. Australian filmmaker Richard Franklin, in his American film debut, directed from an original script by Tom Holland.

Though Perkins' dedication to his craft is unquestioned, he would be the first to admit that his first priority is his family — Berenson and their two children, Osgood and Elvis. The four share a spacious, ranch-style home tucked away under the cover of evergreens in the Hollywood Hills. In his living room, where colorful native American rugs and draperies contrast pleasingly with the broad, brown planks of a hardwood floor, the actor relaxes and talks about the sequel.

On the one hand, he mused, who would have thought there was any more to tell, what with Norman safely tucked away in an institution; but, on the other, "Maybe after a twenty-two-year wait," he says, "it makes the story easier to perpetuate, to get a natural re-start. I mean, it's no good if Norman escapes and makes his way back to Fairville, and the motel. I think you have to start with as reasonable a concept as the original which, though gothic and bizarre, was basically a small town story that had its basis in the commonplace ingredients of our society, like people owning motels and operating small businesses."

Psycho II begins with Norman Bates being released from custody and judged fit for society. He returns to Fairville and his motel, the operation of which has been casually overseen by a local bank. Norman also takes a part-time job in a diner, where he meets Mary, played by Meg Tilly. Mary is down on her luck and is suddenly without a place to live, so Norman offers her a room at the motel, free of charge.

But, and this is a whale of a *but*, while Norman's been away, the bank has allowed the Bates Motel to operate as an adult motel, catering to one-hour rentals, and Perkins, slipping humorously into character, adds, "Norman doesn't care for that."

Recapturing the persona of Bates, Perkins says, wasn't too hard. "I just got under the skin of the guy." Perkins also had the support of Franklin and Holland, two very cooperative and confident talents.

"In a couple of instances," Perkins elaborates, "Richard and Tom and I would talk and I'd say, 'Well, Norman just wouldn't do something like this,' and they were quite open about changes. I've found that the bigger the talent, the more that all concerned are secure with their materials and their talents, then the more likely it is that the field is open for discussion. Hitchcock was that way. He had all the confidence in his own work in the world."

As does Perkins in Franklin, whose most recent work was *Road Games*, an Australian release starring Stacy Keach and Jamie Lee Curtis. "He seemed ideal for the job," the actor comments. "Here's a young guy who's passionately interested in the thriller genre, who's made a couple already, who went to the USC film school and who's a disciple of Hitchcock's. In fact, he knew him very well, and knew all of Hitchcock's films as well, plus he has that sense of humor that Hitchcock had."

The original *Psycho* was a quick, 30-day shoot and Perkins says the sequel didn't take much longer. All filming took place on Universal's Studio City lot, where the Bates Motel, and Norman's home behind it, were reconstructed using the first film and some blueprints. Sets were also arranged as close to the original as possible. The efforts of production designer John Corso and set decorator Jennifer Polito paid off and Perkins complimented them when he said that being on the set was "just like going home." Also making the star feel comfortable was Vera Miles, reprising her role as Lila from the original film. Working with Miles, Perkins says, "was very good, better than the first time."

To achieve the tone and feel of a psychological thriller, cinematographer Dean Cundey (who worked with John Carpenter on *The Thing*, *Escape from New York* and others), and director Franklin studied films of the German Expressionist movement which employed exaggerated sets and deep shadow areas, as exemplified by the classics of F.W. Murnau, *Sunrise* and *Nosferatu*. They also screened such works of Hitchcock's as *The Lodger*, the 1926 piece about Jack the Ripper that in ways resembles *Psycho*.

Transferring the black and white aura into color is a tricky business, but, Perkins says, this was achieved "by using a lot of primary colors, a lot of bright colors and deep dark blacks. So often, when a picture seeks to have a black and white feeling, colors will be muted, as with the use of pastels to cut down the contrast, with an eye to achieving the graveness of black-&-white. But the predominant color in black-&-white is black, so you need that intensity. I like to call this process black and color."

The commercial viability of *Psycho II* brought out Perkins' observations on the current state of filmmaking. "Yes, there's certainly an audience that's eager to see this *Psycho II*, and all that's required is that it be good. This is sort of a throwback to the Forties, when people went to see pictures, just as long as they were good.

"Then, your worry wasn't whether the film could be sold because there was a built-in audience. People either went to the movies or they didn't, there wasn't anything else to spend their entertainment dollar on.

"Today, there are too many things to spend money on, and this means that a lot of good films, fine films with strong casts and good stories, don't get seen. That's discouraging.

"So with *Psycho II*, the burden is squarely where it belongs, with us, the people who made the film. We know there are no excuses for *Psycho II* not to make it at the box office and with the critics, because there are people out there eager to like it. Our picture simply has to be good."

Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins) spies an old friend hiding in the cake (top left) . . . Mary (Meg Tilly) comforts desperate Norman (top right), but no one comforts poor Lila (Vera Miles, below). Perkins confers with director Richard Franklin (below left); Franklin, an Australian graduate of USC, has "that sense of humor Hitchcock had."

Bad Boys

BY BILL BRAUNSTEIN

Possessed of a broad comic streak in his private life, young actor Sean Penn (Tim Hutton's best buddy in* Taps *and the lovable goof Spicolli in* Fast Times at Ridgemont High*), turned deadly earnest for his slot in* Bad Boys, *holding character even after the day's shooting was wrapped. Above, Rainford Juvenile Correction Facility, the reform school setting of* Bad Boys, *has its work cut out. A burly cafeteria worker seems to have weathered too many remarks about his turkey noodle surprise.

There are hardened criminals housed in St. Charles, a correctional institute located in Chicago, not unlike others scattered across the country. Some are in for manslaughter, but they also serve time for crimes like burglary, auto theft, drug peddling, armed robbery and rape. While St. Charles may sound like a typical prison, it's not. It's a reformatory. The 400 young people who make up its population are all teenagers.

It is against this real-life backdrop that *Bad Boys,* a sobering no-nonsense tale of teenage violence in the Eighties, takes place. "St. Charles had the traditional correctional look, the look of reality, I wanted for this film," says *Bad Boy*'s producer Bob Solo. And it is this realistic look that will set the movie's tone when it debuts March 25.

The filmmakers spent six days at St. Charles while filming in Chicago last summer and actually employed about 40 residents of the institution as extras. Striving for an authentic, gritty look, director Rick Rosenthal chose to heighten the film's realism and impact by casting actors with relatively unfamiliar faces — the exception being Sean Penn *(Taps, Fast Times at Ridgemont High).*

Penn plays Mick O'Brien, a 16-year-old Chicago street kid who masterminds, along with his best friend, a plan to steal the drugs a Puerto Rican gang, headed by Paco Moreno (Esai Morales), is trying to sell to a black gang. When the plan backfires, O'Brien and his friend are caught in a crossfire between the two gangs.

O'Brien is placed in the Rainford Juvenile Correctional Facility where he comes in contact with a sordid assortment of teenage criminals. Eventually he befriends a 15-year-old arsonist named Horowitz (Eric Gurry).

O'Brien slowly and painfully attempts to put his life in order with the help of two correctional officers, Ramon Herrera (Reni Santoni) and Gene Daniels (Jim Moody). All goes well until Moreno is finally caught and

thrown into the same facility as O'Brien. It is there that the two, driven by mutual hatred, confront each other in what becomes a final showdown.

The inspiration for *Bad Boys* came from a simple one-line idea from producer Bob Solo. Meeting with screenwriter Richard DiLello to discuss the project, Solo told him, "I'm looking for a Jimmy Cagney story set in a modern-day reform school." From there, DiLello was on his own. Two weeks laer he returned with a 10-page outline of the film and was then given the final go-ahead to write the actual script.

After about a year of writing, DiLello completed a first draft, which portrayed the hardnosed lifestyle of teen delinquents. He is almost apologetic about the fact that during the actual writing, he did very little research. "I basically made the whole thing up," he says. Later, after visiting a maximum security reform school and a youth offender processing center, and speaking with a judge and a parole officer, he was surprised to learn that his script was remarkably true to life. "My imagination turned out to be far more accurate than I ever anticipated," he says, laughing.

DiLello's only other published written work (he was a professional photographer early in his career) was a book he wrote in 1971 called *The Longest Cocktail Party,* based on his experiences in London as the Beatles' press assistant. Considering that his association with the Beatles took place during the "peace and love" Sixties, it's ironic that his film deals with teen violence.

"I feel that this movie is a plea for sanity," DiLello says. "It deals with a very violent world and in a very realistic way with young kids who because of illiteracy and lack of parental guidance throw their lives away. What we are trying to say is that these people have a choice in life, but it is up to them to do something about it."

Of all of *Bad Boy*'s actors, Reni Santoni *(Dirty Harry, Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid)* is the only one to stand out as a seasoned actor with many film appearances to his credit. The others are all newer. There are no less than three screen debuts among the other leads, with other cast member's careers also in the beginning stage, including the film's star, Sean Penn.

There were newcomers behind the cameras as well as in front of them, and Rosenthal himself is a prime example. *Bad Boys* is only the second major film that Rosenthal has directed, the first being the commercially successful *Halloween II.* And the screenplay for *Bad Boys* is the first one to be sold by DiLello.

For Rosenthal, *Bad Boys* presented the opportunity to work on a project that he could call his own, unlike *Halloween II,* which he feels placed him under artistic and creative constraints, since he was working with characters that had been established by another director. Rosenthal, whose other credits include directing the TV pilot for last season's short-lived suspense anthology *Darkroom* and the TV-movie *Fire on the Mountain,* believes that *Bad Boys* will make audiences sit up and take notice because of its realistic, unglorified depiction of street fighting.

"I think that although *Bad Boys* is a violent film, because it depicts a violent world, its theme is ultimately anti-violent. But I think that kids who go to see it will ultimately respect it because it doesn't pull its punches."

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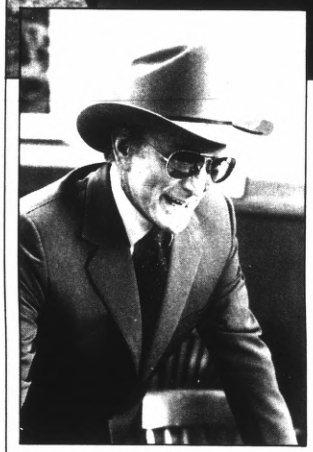


Shades can't dim Kirk Douglas' fanatic gleam. A lawman looking to square the problems of his past by a successful manhunt, Douglas fuels* Eddie Macon's Run *with a complex, nearly maniacal characterization.

Eddie Macon's Run

BY STEVEN BARNES

A lone man, unjustly imprisoned, running for his life and his dreams across a desolated desert landscape . . .

A tough cop, blackballed into a dead-end position on the Texas Department of Corrections, who sees a chance to recoup his dignity and salvage his career . . .

A small Texas town, scarcely changed since its origins 200 years ago, descended upon by a Hollywood film crew determined to transform it into an enormous sound stage . . . Filmmaking is a speculative, volatile business, with careers and millions of dollars riding on the quasi-mystical balance of dozens of factors.

Texas lawmen, at least of the modern era, seldom appear on film as sweet and understanding types. This pair, trying the classic bad cop/worse cop ploy on John Schneider's locks in* Eddie Macon's Run, *spring from the smile-as-you-club-'em fraternity.

With *Eddie Macon's Run*, a pot of gold has been wagered on the abilities of screenwriter/director Jeff Kanew to work the elusive miracle.

Dramatic elements in dynamic balance are the keys to film success. *Run*'s human components are the interacting talents of screen veteran Kirk Douglas and *Dukes of Hazzard* star John Schneider.

Schneider portrays Eddie Macon, who escapes from the Huntsville Prison in Texas in a desperate bid to rejoin his beloved wife and child. Kirk Douglas plays Carl Marzack, former New Jersey police officer whose uncanny knowledge of criminal psychology makes him the natural choice for a manhunt.

Working with a star of Douglas' magnitude and experience has to be an exacting experience. According to director Kanew "Kirk is amazing. His character, Marzack, is intimidating, with a mad gleam in his eye, but he is much more than just a 'heavy.' There is an element of humor in Marzack's character that Kirk emphasized. Whenever he comes on the scene, you never quite know whether he is going to smack somebody or sing a song," Kanew said. "He is right on the nose in terms of technical things and adjusts easily in terms of performance."

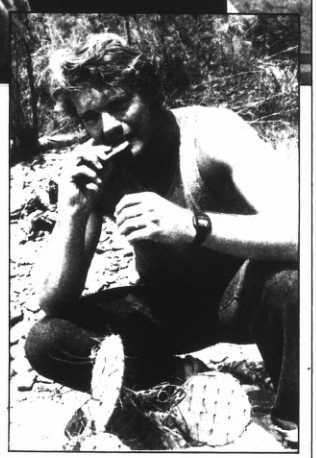
But Kanew feels Douglas' costar was no slouch either. "John has learned a lot from the fast pace of filming a weekly TV show. The intensity of that experience has given him a similar level of craftsmanship. They are both in terrific physical shape and were able to handle their demanding roles."

They may have survived their roles, but what of the town of Laredo, Texas? In a motion picture, the location is as important a component as any human actor. Laredo's surrounding deserts were utilized for Schneider's grueling running sequences, its outlying ranches and homes used for external and internal sets.

"Laredo had everything that was right for the movie," says producer Lou Stroller, "including extremely cooperative and friendly people. Jeff and I decided that we could do everything there. Logistically, being in one location was important for a film like this. It saved a great deal of time and money."

Every action-adventure movie needs a car chase, and *Eddie Macon's Run* utilized the streets of downtown Laredo for theirs. Hundreds of people choked the heart of Laredo's major metropolitan district to watch stuntmen performing their trade: running stop signs and red lights, missing collisions by a hair's breadth and, in general, doing all of the things that any good, law-abiding Laredan would never *dream* of.

The film company received permission to film on *both* sides of the Laredo/Mexico border as well, which provides a gritty authenticity unavailable in studio backlots.



The fruit of the prickly pear cactus, called* nopales *south of the border, sustains prison escapee John Schneider in a harsh land. As Eddie Macon in* Eddie Macon's Run, *the cactus is almost his only friend.

Kanew, having directed only one feature film (1978's *Natural Enemies*, starring Hal Holbrook and Louise Fletcher), here has graduated from editing and directing film trailers for such films as *The Graduate, Shampoo, All the President's Men, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Annie Hall.*

The elements of his screenplay are classic — a manhunt wherein an implacable tracker bears down on an innocent man — and can be traced at least as far back as Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables.* The setting, too, is classic — small-town Western America. A success here could elevate writer/director Kanew into that privileged group of filmmakers which bankers and studios will automatically trust.

The film opens March 25.

Inflation is threatening the evolution of higher education.

–Charles Darwin
Naturalist

Inflation is making everyone struggle harder for survival these days. So why should we be particularly concerned over what it's doing to higher education?

Does it really matter to the rest of us if colleges can't buy all the books they need? If laboratories don't have all the latest equipment? If courses on subjects we've never even heard of have to be dropped? If, in fact, a number of colleges actually have to go out of business?

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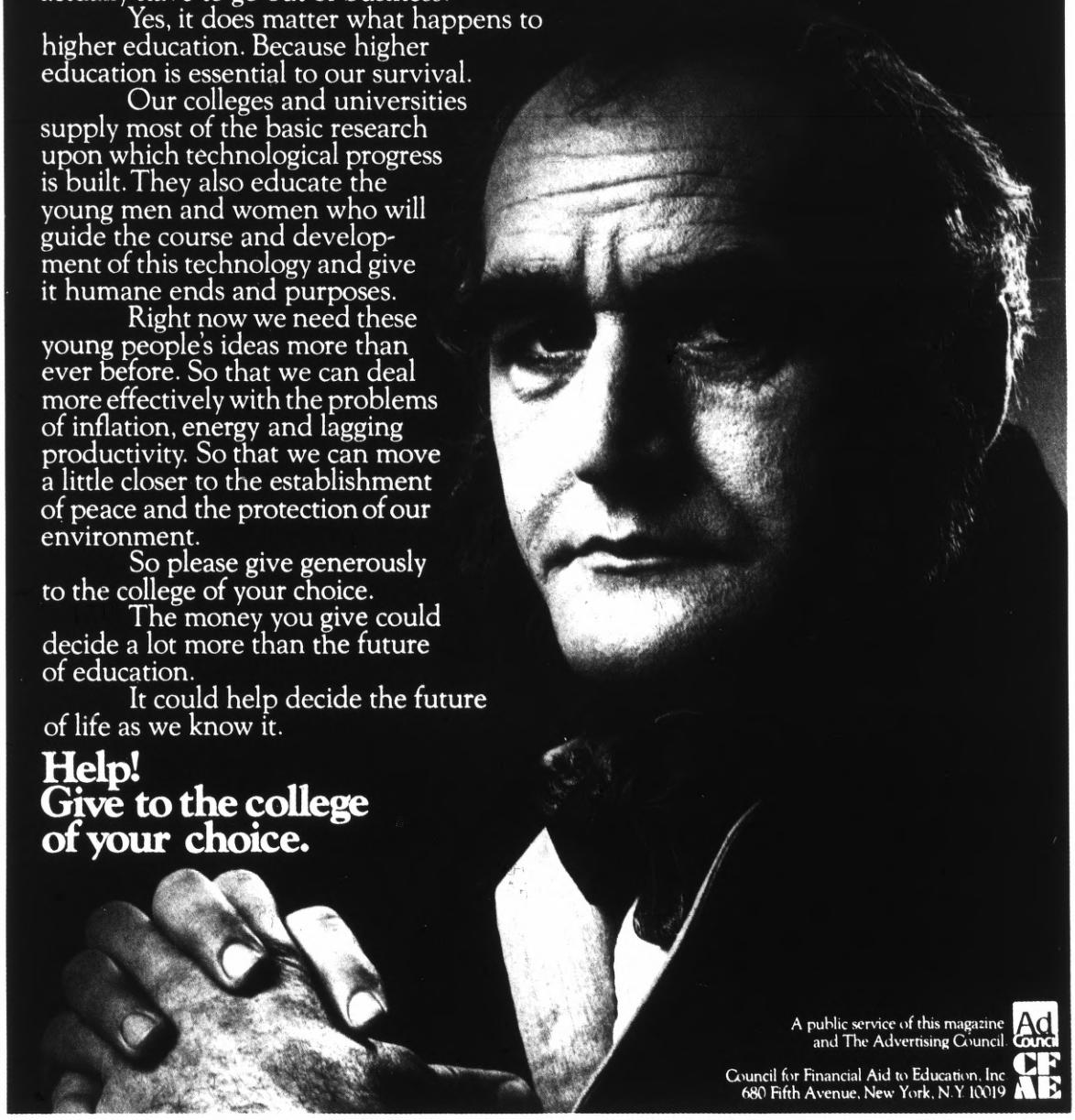

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Doctor Detroit Will See You Now...
& vice versa

BY GENE SISKEL
Chicago Tribune movie critic

DAN AYKROYD tells the first joke on himself: "What's blue and sings alone?" he asks. "Dan Aykroyd."

That Aykroyd can tell such a joke indicates he has been able to deal with the death of his best friend and show business partner, John Belushi.

"More than missing the work we might have done together, I miss him — a friend whom I could call any time of the day or night. He was always happy to see me, and I was always happy to see him. There was very little friction between us. I can't think of any argument that ever lasted more than 24 hours.

"It was one of the great friendships of the decade, if not the century," Aykroyd says with a big grin, "and it will go down as such, I think.

"John and I knew that it wouldn't last forever. We used to say, 'The fast die young; leave a good-looking corpse.' In the back of his head he knew that one day he might hear that I had been killed on my bike, and I knew that one day I might hear that he had gone out through his own physical clumsiness or the way he actually went.

"Look, we both worked hard and played hard. After the funeral my father told me something. He said he had been prepared for years to get a call saying, 'Your son is in a box.'

"I think John and I are typical of our generation," he says, by way of bringing the subject to a close. "We live life to the fullest (now). We don't wait cautiously and plan our lives. Maybe if we were Sons of Harvard we'd be more cautious, but that's not who we are. I ride a motorcycle, and if it weren't against the law I'd ride without my helmet."

Why did Belushi die and Aykroyd survive? Aykroyd himself may not have the answer, but to those who knew both men, the answer is obvious. Aykroyd is more of a thinker and a writer than a free spirit. His humor is more restrained and cerebral than physical. He has a machine-like mind that spits out facts, not food in a food fight.

"I've had some wild times," he says "but I'm pretty cautious, even though I take risks. I've been instructed by my doctor to stop drinking. He told me to cool it, because of some blood indicators. And I have cut down, but it's awfully hard not to throw back a beer or two."

Aykroyd's film and TV career has not slowed down a bit. He can be seen on an occasional TV special hosted by the likes of Steve Martin or any other comic of the *Saturday Night Live* mold. And Aykroyd, 33, is receiving top billing in his next movie, *Doctor Detroit,* a comedy due for nationwide release May 6, in which Aykroyd plays a Jekyll-and-Hyde role, a college English professor who masquerades as a jive-talking pimp in an effort to protect a string of prostitutes from getting beaten up.

Aykroyd's character is named Cliff Skridlow, and Cliff's specialty in English literature is the subject of chivalry. One day while jogging down the street, Cliff bumps into a pimp named Smooth (Howard Hesseman), who has wiggled his way out of an unpleasant confrontation with local mobsters by blaming his problems on a nonexistent "big, bad dude" named Doctor Detroit.

After Cliff spends some time in a hot tub with four of Smooth's finest women, he agrees to become the fictitious Doctor Detroit in an effort to save the damsels in distress. Chivalry and all that.

Exterior filming on *Doctor Detroit* took place last summer in Chicago. In Chicago Aykroyd is regarded as an honorary citizen because of his friendship with home-town boy Belushi and because Chicago was the location of Aykroyd's greatest film success, *The Blues Brothers,* which became a significant moneymaker despite an outrageous production cost and many negative reviews.

Aykroyd has had leading roles in the movies before *Doctor Detroit* — *The Blues Brothers* and *Neighbors* — but *Doctor Detroit* represents the first time he is being asked to carry a movie without the chemistry and good will guaranteed by Belushi. Hollywood executives will be looking to the success of *Doctor Detroit* to see if Aykroyd can be liked by an audience — which can be crucial for a movie star — as much as he is admired for his abilities as a mimic. Aykroyd knows the issue well, the difference between being liked and being admired. It's the difference between playing the lead character or his oddball buddy. It's a difference that can be worth $500,000 a picture.

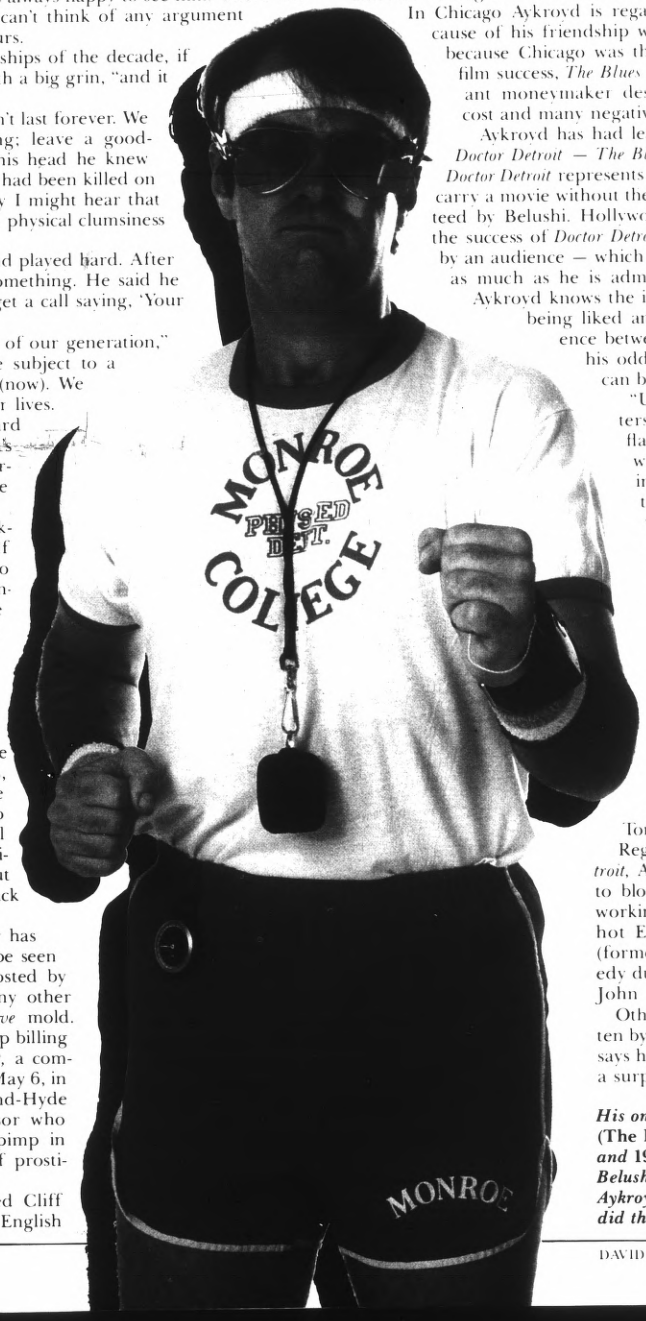
"Unlike John I don't play characters that the audience (loves). I'm flattered enough that they just want to see me. I don't mind being the Frankenstein of comedy, if that's what I am. I have friends who have love in their hearts for me, so that I don't need to get that kind of response in terms of screen roles. I'm a mercenary — a hired, contracted agent — and I just do my job, sir, and that's it."

Aykroyd gives his "yes, sir" response in a rapid-fire speech pattern that sounds a lot like a cross between his TV pitchman on *Saturday Night Live* — "Isn't that amazing!" — and his mimicry on the same show of the officious-when-challenged Tom Snyder.

Regardless of the success of *Doctor Detroit,* Aykroyd's movie career is not going to blow away. This winter he was busy working in New York City with the red-hot Eddie Murphy on *Trading Places* (formerly titled *Black and White*), a comedy due for summer release, directed by John Landis *(The Blues Brothers).*

Other film and television projects written by Aykroyd are in the works, too. He says he likes TV — and this may come as a surprise — for financial reasons.

His only previous starring roles (The Blues Brother, Neighbors, and 1941) also starred the late John Belushi. Will audiences embrace Aykroyd alone as heartily as they did the Aykroyd-Belushi duo?



DAVID ALEXANDER

That's Aykroyd in the middle, taking instruction instead of giving it. After splashing around with these four beauties, the good doctor decides to don shining armor and shield them from a beastly gangster. All in the name of chivalry, of course.

"It's a better living for me. It's much better from a salary point of view. In films, all of the grosses go to the producers. In TV (with syndication rights and reruns), the talent has a chance at fair compensation. So the key for me now is to create new TV and to extend my royalties so that if I want to pack it in someday, I can."

Would Dan Aykroyd really pack it in someday? He's a difficult man to get to know. He's been called both "the Funny Man of a Thousand Faces" and "the Man in the Shadows." Born in Ottawa, Canada and raised in Hull, Quebec, Daniel Edward Aykroyd has lived a life in good-natured rebellion against his father, a straight-laced Canadian government transportation official.

Both Dan and his younger brother Peter, 30, took the comedy route in rebellion, with Peter also working in the Second City comedy revue troup in Toronto where Danny got his big break.

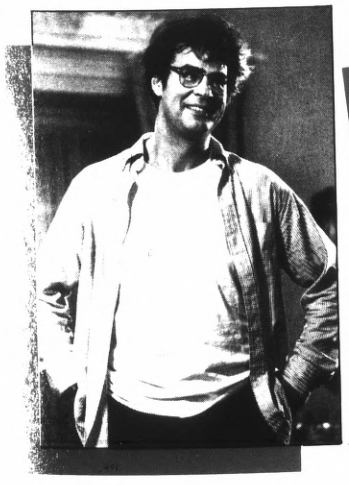
"The guy who put my life on a different path," Aykroyd once told *Rolling Stone* magazine, "was my friend Dave Benoit. I love him dearly. He's a low-class merchant seaman — by his own admission. He turned me on to music, let me smoke my first joint, introduced me to a woman I had a little thing with when I was 14, and awakened me to the hip scene around '67 in Ottawa, this whole underworld I never knew existed. I decided I was dropping out and I've never looked back."

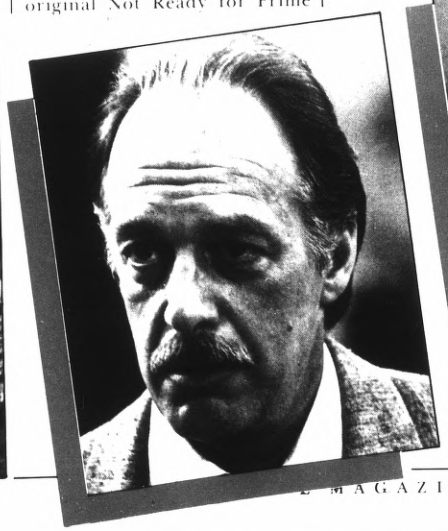
Aykroyd turned his back on the seminary education his father wanted as well as an assortment of straight jobs. His involvement at Second City led to linking up with John Belushi at the original Chicago Second City cabaret theater (alma mater of Mort Sahl, Mike Nichols and Elaine May). Both, of course, were selected as two of the original Not Ready for Prime Time Players on *Saturday Night Live*, where Aykroyd developed his wicked impersonations of Tom Snyder, Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon. He also created with writer Tom Davis the much loved Coneheads, and with Steve Martin he developed those wild and crazy Czech Brothers.

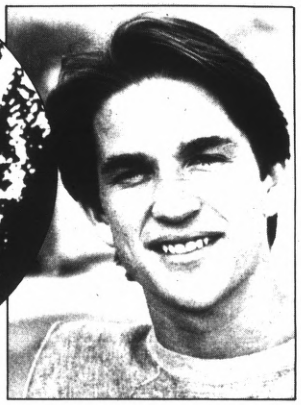
Catching Aykroyd in a pensive mood is not easy. That rapid-fire pace appears to be most constant, at least while he is at work on a movie. But he does reveal a side of himself in response to that old chestnut of an interviewer's question, "What do you know for sure about life?"

"What do I know for sure?," he says, haltingly. "Well, you come on this planet, you're born alone and you die alone. It's a solo journey. Sure, you can give love and take love, but basically life is a solo trip. You can be a receiving dish for all sorts of data, but ultimately the place to find all your answers is within yourself. You have to provide your own solace. I know that it's not very original, but I do believe it. I really do."

Mild-mannered university professor Cliff Skridlow, a timid schlub of a romantic (left), encounters the oily pimp Smooth (Howard Hesseman, center), and ends up in that hot tub with four of Smooth's "employees." Very soon Doctor Detroit/Mr. Hyde emerges from Dr. Skridlow/Dr. Jekyll — although in several disguises, one of them a Southern diplomat (right).







Private School

BY ERIC ESTRIN

One of the top-grossing films of 1981 featured a lucky young man discovering his emerging sexuality with the help of a sensuous older woman, played by Sylvia Kristel. It was called *Private Lessons*, and it earned a measure of critical respect (not to mention more than $50 million) for handling its potentially exploitive subject matter with an appropriately lighthearted touch.

In selected cities, on April 22, that film's producer, R. Ben Efraim, will release *Private School*, a movie geared toward the same core audience of young film-goers and involving many of the elements of its predecessor. Though it's technically not a sequel, *School* was penned by the same screenwriter (Dan Greenburg, this time with an assist from his wife, Suzanne O'Malley) and features a guest performance by Kristel as Miss Regina Copuletta, a sex education teacher at the exclusive Cherryvale Academy for Women.

Starring Phoebe Cates *(Fast Times at Ridgemont High, Paradise)* and relative newcomer Matthew Modine as the young couple trying to successfully consummate their first love in the midst of peer pressures, petty jealousies and other standard adolescent concerns, *School* promises to deliver the same type of innocent, teasing sexuality that made *Lessons* such a hit with the student-aged audience.

Producer Efraim cheerily admits this is a formula film and gladly points to the massive amounts of research he conducted to develop the formula. "Our elaborate testing showed that the most important element in appealing to the young audience is what the movie's about — the overall concept. Then, we wanted to do something different [from the previous film] but with the same approach. We found that young females were not into the young boy/older woman relationship of *Private Lessons*, and I wanted to find a way to get them excited, too. So we set the movie in a private school for girls."

Lest he be accused of sacrificing the heart and soul of his movie to satisfy the numbers, Efraim has assembled a top quality cast and crew to assure that his view — or the view of the test sample — becomes reality. In addition to Cates and Modine, the film stars Ray Walston *(Fast Times)* as the lecherous chauffeur Chauncey; Richard Stahl *(9 To 5, Under the Rainbow)* as a funny drunk; and a batch of attractive young newcomers discovered, in many cases, through an exhaustive nationwide talent search.

In the role of Jim Green, for instance, who plays opposite the Cates character Chris Ramsay, the producers wanted a young man who could project shy vulnerability as well as masculinity and strength. They found him in Modine, who recently made his film debut in John Sayles' *Baby, It's You.*

In deciding on Modine, Efraim took the word of dozens of girls who viewed videotaped screentests and wrote down their comments for tabulation. The same procedure was followed, using a male test audience, to fill the role of Jordan Leigh-Jensen, Chris' Cherryvale rival whose pursuit of Jim puts him in a confusing, if somewhat enviable, bind. Betsy Russell, a stunningly sexy San Diego native with television experience *(T.J. Hooker, The Powers of Matthew Star)* got the call.

The film also features Michael Zorek as horny Bubba Beauregard, and Jonathan Prince (of TV's *Mr. Merlin)* as unofficial scorekeeper in the extra-curricular sexual highjinks. When Bubba dresses as a girl to get a first-hand look at the crowded girls' locker room, one of the bodies prominently on display belongs to Lynda Weismeier, *Playboy's* July 1982, Playmate of the Month.

A different sort of visual stimulation occurs in one of the film's more outrageous comic sequences, when a classic, vintage limousine careens recklessly through a school "Parents' Day" gathering and bounds 50 feet through the air, winding up in the swimming pool. The maneuver was rigged and performed by stunt coordinator John Meier.

Veteran director Noel Black *(A Man, A Woman and A Bank)* oversees the action, which was photographed by Oscar-winning cinematographer Walter Lassally *(Zorba the Greek, Tom Jones).*

Producing along with Efraim is Don Enright, son of the successful film and television impresario Dan Enright, who is Efraim's partner in Unity Pictures Corporation. Efraim and the elder Enright formed Unity after the success of *Private Lessons*, which they worked on for Barry & Enright Films. After anticipated high marks at the box office for *School*, they plan to graduate to other "Private . . ." films, beginning with something called *Private Education*, which will take place at a resort.

"Young audiences are in a sense very predictable," says Efraim, explaining why he's confident that *School*, which cost only $3 million to make, will gain box office honors this summer. "Once you get the reading [of test data], it's going to be valid. In other words, when you're dealing with frequent film-goers, if you listen to what they tell you, you're gonna be successful."

Because rock music plays such an important part in young people's lives, Efraim promises an exciting, progressive score to accompany the film. Included are several hit songs by as-yet-unnamed major groups, as well as original material. Even Phoebe Cates gets into the act with two numbers of her own.

And because his testing indicates that viewers want to see plenty of flesh, Efraim says he has loaded *Private School* with "possibly more nudity than any picture ever made in America — far more than *Porky's* or *Animal House*, but not as raunchy. There's a fine line between offending your audience and making them comfortable with what they see on the screen," he says. "That innocent kind of sexuality is our trademark."

Efraim easily uses the logic of the marketplace to dismiss questions about whether the abundance of young nudity might push his film across the line into exploitation. "I don't think it could be considered exploitation in any way," he says. "I have nothing but respect for the audience, and I'm expressing it by finding out what they want to see."

Left, a bawdy comedy requires the right sort of bodies. Phoebe Cates (in the Cherries Jubilee leotards) and friends (from left to right) Kathy Wilhoite, Betsy Russell and Kari Lizer enliven* Private School *even in the quietest moments.

Producer R. Ben Efraim (in the circle), architect of the financially successful* Private Lessons, *has brought his star from that film (Sylvia Kristel of* Emmanuelle *fame) to the mythical Cherryvale Academy for Women to assist her charges (she's a sex ed teacher) with a rather ribald upbringing.

Above, Michael Modine passed a tough test for* Private School *— his screentest was evaluated by dozens of teenage girls. In the story, his test is to choose between a pair of lovely rivals.

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